

*Quality of Life Result:* All children who are blind, visually impaired or deafblind are successful in school and in life.

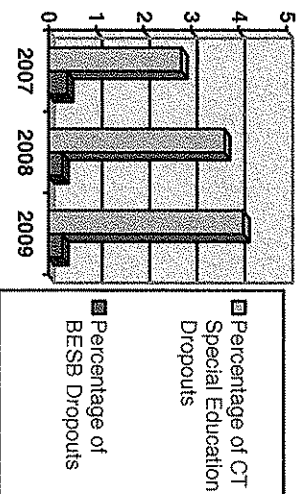
*Contribution to Result:* By providing direct teaching to children with visual impairments, equipment and educational materials, and training and consultation to local educational teams and families, BESB ensures that children can be successful in school along with their sighted peers. Instruction in all areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum maximizes each child's ability to live independently as an adult.

*Partners:* CT Birth to Three (DDBS), State Department of Education, Department of Correction (DOC), Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (DSS), New England Center for Deafblind, school administrators, and community volunteers.

**Performance Measure 1:** Students with blindness and visual impairments, who are supported by BESB, remain in high school at a higher rate than the overall population of special education students.

Statewide dropout rate for special education students reported by SDE (dropouts / total enrolled grades 9-12):  
 2007: 620 / 22,211 = 2.8%  
 2008: 803 / 21,944 = 3.7%  
 2009: 879 / 21,640 = 4.1%

Dropout rate of BESB students with visual impairments:  
 2007: 1 / 232 = 0.4%  
 2008: 1 / 293 = 0.3%  
 2009: 1 / 316 = 0.3%



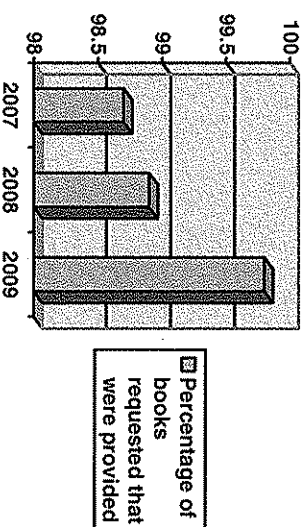
**Story behind the baseline:** Dropout rates for special education students statewide are significantly higher than the dropout rate for students with blindness and visual impairments served by BESB. Extensive services provided by BESB ensure a higher degree of success in

school than if specialized support was not available. BESB provides direct instruction in the following areas: compensatory skills (including Braille instruction), assistive technology, social interaction skills, independent living skills, recreation and leisure, sensory efficiency, self-determination, orientation and mobility, and career education. These supports, along with training and consultation for families and local school districts, enable students to be successful in their educational programs.

**Proposed actions to turn the curve:** Caseload sizes have risen slightly since budgetary constraints have precluded the hiring of certified Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI) to replace losses incurred through attrition. BESB will seek to increase group training opportunities for students to supplement individualized instruction.

**Performance Measure 2:** Provision of Braille and large print books requested by local school districts to ensure that students with blindness or visual impairments have the same access to the curriculum as their sighted peers.

Books provided / books requested:  
 2007: 1796 / 1819 = 98.7%  
 2008: 1643 / 1662 = 98.9%  
 2009: 1763 / 1776 = 99.8%



**Story behind the baseline:** The graph illustrates the commitment of BESB to ensure that students who are blind or visually impaired have accessible textbooks available to fully participate in classroom activities. Letters are sent to special education directors stressing the importance of timely requests for books that need to be produced in an accessible format. Late requests cause delays in timely provision of materials. For materials such as math, science, and foreign language texts that require specialized Braille transcriptionists, late requests may mean the book can not be provided in the student's preferred format.

**Proposed actions to turn the curve:** BESB uses a combination of purchased texts, an agency maintained resource library, training of community volunteers who can produce Braille texts via computer, as well as collaboration with DOC for training inmates to produce Braille. This combination of efforts must be maintained to meet a goal of providing 100% of requested texts.

Program Report Card: **Children's Services Division, BESB**

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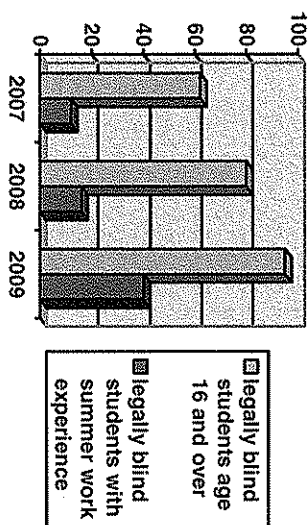
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**Partners:** CT Birth to Three (DDS), State Department of Education, Department of Correction (DOC), Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (DSS), New England Center for Deafblind, school administrators, and community volunteers.

BESB also provides monthly training in Braille for paraprofessionals serving students who read tactually. Well-trained paraprofessionals produce the daily materials needed by students in Braille, as well as some of the materials that cannot be purchased on short notice. Training of students on methods of downloading books electronically supplements hard copies of texts and ensures students have skills to access materials independently when they transition to college.

**Performance Measure 3:** Increase in the percentage of transition eligible students who are legally blind, age 16 and over, who successfully completed a summer job experience through BESB over the last 3 years.

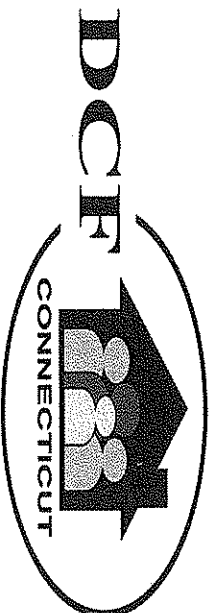
Legally blind students with summer work / total transition-age Vocational Rehabilitation students:  
 2007: 12 / 62 = 19%  
 2008: 16 / 80 = 20%  
 2009: 40 / 95 = 42%



**Story behind the baseline:** The opportunity to experience work while in high school is strongly correlated with successful employment as an adult. Unemployment rates for adults with disabilities averages approximately 70% nationally. Providing job opportunities to youth with disabilities, in addition to providing independent living training, will lead to a greater likelihood of career success after graduation. The agency presently has only one Transition School-to-Work Coordinator, assigned to the Vocational Rehabilitation division. That program works exclusively with transition-age students who are legally blind. The annual increase in summer work opportunities for these students is evident in the data chart. Similar initiatives for students with visual impairments would yield greater successes after high school for all students served in Children's Services.

**Proposed actions to turn the curve:** Seek to increase the number of students with summer work experiences

by utilizing the cost-efficient approach of reclassifying an existing position in Children's Services to encompass the role of transition coordinator to mirror the transition coordinator currently employed at BESB in the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Division. A Children's Services transition coordinator would increase the number of summer work experiences by fostering participation of an additional 70 students who are visually impaired.



## **Results-Based Accountability Framework**

### **January 2010**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The well-being of children is the interest of everyone. As family and community members, professionals, policy-makers and advocates, collective work towards what is necessary for children to properly grow and develop is best done. Being accountable for this requires routine methods of measurement and information gathering to describe the status of children and communicate the shared successes and challenges.

One method of accomplishing this need for accountability is utilizing the principles and techniques of Results-Based Accountability (RBA), which provides a means of evaluating data and focusing on results through population-based measures, as well as agency or program-based measures.

In an effort to advance this approach under the rubric of child well-being, the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) applied an RBA framework across its statutorily mandated work in the areas of child protection, juvenile justice, behavioral health, and prevention services. This framework is intended to accomplish three key objectives:

- 1) Clearly and simply state the agency's values and describe the results it seeks to achieve consistent with its mission as a consolidated children's agency.
- 2) Serve as a management tool allowing leaders at DCF and external stakeholders to have a common framework for identifying strengths and areas needing improvement.
- 3) Offer a window into the performance of DCF by presenting key data elements in user-friendly formats that help us and our stakeholders understand whether we are reaching our goals.

The framework was accomplished utilizing RBA principles and was developed by relying on six sequenced steps:

- 1) Depict DCF's sphere of influence in relationship to all children in the state by offering a visualization of the number of youth involved in child protection services and to what degree relative to child population as a whole;

- 2) Develop a summary table that offers a Population Result Statement to which DCF makes an important contribution towards achieving and outline population indicators relative to that statement;
- 3) Develop a list of "Headliner Performance Measures" and "Strategic Areas" specifically related to the work of DCF and which bear relationship with the Population Result Statement;
- 4) Produce graphed data trends for each performance measure;
- 5) Review the performance trend and offer commentary on what the trend indicates, how to change or accelerate the trend line, and if there are any critical data development needs in order to better inform how well the agency is performing; and;
- 6) Determine what the available options (cost, low-cost and no-cost) are for action(s) that will "turn the curve" or improve performance.

In this framework, there is no single performance measure that serves to measure any strategic area. Instead, it is the composite assessment of the multiple performance measures associated with each strategic area that provide the best picture of how well the agency is performing. Further, no strategic area or performance measure is more or less important than another. However, it may be useful to note that, as presented below, the strategic areas successively reflect increasingly intensive services by DCF and each strategic area is followed by the list of performance measures that serve as composite measures for that result.

When considering available options for the Department in an effort to improve performance ("Turn the Curve"), there are generally four major action areas for its consideration, including:

- Improving the service array--e.g. existing service expansion or modification, new service development, or improved resource management
- Enhancing internal practice improvements--e.g. quality improvement activities, changes in practice philosophy, and training
- Strengthening external relations
- Enhancing administrative practice and organizational structure

DCF is committed to objective measurement of its performance and in developing its analytic reporting experience. This RBA formatted presentation of the Department's strategic plan is an important investment towards building this capacity.